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It is for these reasons that we have resolved to decline the office of Commissioners under the act in question, and we have deemed it the most proper and respectful course to communicate to your Excellency the reasons of our decision.

GEO. SHARSWOOD,
J. I. CLARK HARE.

NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

A PRACTICAL TREATISE ON THE LAW OF EVIDENCE. By THOMAS STARKIE, Esq., of the Inner Temple, one of her Majesty's counsel. The eighth American, from the fourth London edition. By GEORGE MORELEY DOWDESWELL, and JOHN GEORGE MALCOM, ESQUIRES, of the Inner Temple, barristers at law. With notes and references to American cases, by GEORGE SHARSWOOD. Together with the notes to former American editions, by THERON METCALF, EDWARD D. INGRAHAM, and BENJAMIN GERHARD, ESQUIRES. Philadelphia: T. & J. W. Johnson & Co. 1860.

A notice of Starkie on Evidence, at this day is, perhaps, calculated to excite a smile in our readers. But in truth the moderate sized volume before us is so much improved and so much compressed that it deserves every commendation. The excellent notes of the American edition have long been familiar to the bar, and no more need be said of them. But the body of the work has been adapted to the present state of the law, and while we lose nothing of value, the rubbish is all swept away. No books in our libraries have a greater charm for us or a more direct value than treatises on evidence. And none have been written which at once are so strictly scientific, so logical and so practical as the acceptable books of the late professor Greenleaf and Mr. Pitt Taylor. Mr. Starkie's treatise has also its established place and will always maintain a first class rank.

REPORTS OF CASES ARGUED AND DETERMINED IN THE SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE, during the year 1858. By JOHN W. HEAD, State Reporter. Vol. 1. Nashville: J. O. Griffith & Co. 1860.

We have read this volume of Mr. Head's reports, with much pleasure. The profession in Tennessee should be rejoiced to have a reporter who so faithfully and so ably discharges his duty. We have marked several cases

to be transferred from his pages to our own, but thus far have not found room for them. This volume is a model in many respects; its mechanical details are excellent; and every labor saving convenience is to be found here in full use. We trust the learned reporter during his term will continue to perform his duties in the same satisfactory manner.

THE LAW OF CONTRACTS. By THEOPHILUS PARSONS, LL. D., Dane Professor of Law in Harvard University, at Cambridge. Fourth edition. In two volumes. pp. 722 and 911. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1860.

There is no branch of jurisprudence which more largely affects the business of life than does the law of contracts. Its importance is indisputable; for whatever conceivable case of legal inquiry we may put to our minds, if it falls not within the limits of criminal jurisdiction, almost ex necessitate, it resolves itself into a matter of contract; or, in other words, the law of contracts may be said to include, directly or indirectly, almost all the law administered in our courts, a comprehension which is rendered necessary by the very nature of things, and does not result from any arbitrary principle of arrangement.

Conscious of this importance, Professor Parsons has given to the profession a fourth edition of the above work. This last revision is better than any previous imprint, being thoroughly revised and improved by additions of the latest and best authorities. The principles are tersely expressed, and the same comprehensive exposition of the subject is preserved which characterizes his Maritime Law.

In preparing this fourth edition, the learned author has successfully endeavored to make his valuable work more worthy of the favor which has already exhausted three large editions. The third edition contained two new chapters. This has two more chapters, and many new sections, and new paragraphs in almost every chapter, and more than two thousand new cases are cited. Profiting by all friendly criticisms, and receiving none but such as were friendly, the author has attained a very high degree of excellence. The book is full, perspicuous, accurate and logical, and the principles stated are sustained by reference to the most recent adjudicated cases. The student, as well as the practising lawyer, has a very reliable book. Such an edition cannot fail to meet that signal success which it richly merits.